



June 2004

# **NITRATE Public Health Advisory Packet:**

## ***Instructions for use by water systems***

### **Purpose of the packet**

The materials in this packet are designed to help you respond during times of high nitrate levels in your water supply. If you have nitrate contamination in your system, you will be working closely with Department of Health (DOH) to resolve the situation and make sure your customers are adequately notified.

### **Contents**

#### **Publications:**

- Nitrate in Drinking Water – English and Spanish (fact sheet)
- Drinking Water After-Hours Emergency Hotline (brochure)
- Nitrate Sampling Procedure (brochure)
- Nitrate Reporting Addresses and Phone Numbers (with map)

#### **Forms and News Release Templates:**

- “Warning to Drinking Water Customers” public notice – English and Spanish
- Door hanger style public notice – English on one side, Spanish on reverse side
- Public Notice Certification
- News Release: Nitrate Advisory
- News Release: Rescind Nitrate Advisory

### **How to Use Forms and Templates**

**Public Notification:** When a public water system has sample results above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10.0 milligrams per liter (mg/L) for nitrate, they must notify their customers within 24 hours of receiving the sample results. The “Warning to Drinking Water Customers” and door hanger style public notice are provided for this purpose.

The “Warning to Drinking Water Customers” is more detailed than the door hanger style public notice and provides more information regarding health effects and instructions to consumers.

The door hanger style public notice is a quick method of informing customers of contamination in the system and precautions to take. Supplies of these are available through local health departments and the Office of Drinking Water regional offices.

There are several ways to use these forms during a public health advisory:

- Write your information on the form(s) and distribute.
- Print labels with contact information, I.D. number, and date notice distributed, then attach to door hangers.
- Use the “Warning to Drinking Water Customers” public notice by stapling it to the door hanger.
- Stamp your name and contact information on the forms and write in the date issued.

**Public Notice Certification:** This certification must be completed and mailed to your regional office within 10 days of notifying your customers of an MCL violation. You must also include a copy of the public notification provided to you customers (i.e., “Warning to Drinking Water Customers”). An electronic version of this certification can be e-mailed to you on request, or downloaded from our Web site.

**News releases:** These templates include sample information the Department of Health recommends, including a news release for television, radio and newspaper outlets. These can also be provided to you electronically. The Department of Health can assist you in contacting the news media, upon request.

### **For more information**

The Nitrate Public Health Public Advisory Packet (DOH Pub. #331-259) is available from your Office of Drinking Water regional office:

**Northwest Regional Office – Kent**

253-395-6750

**Southwest Regional Office – Olympia**

360-664-0768

**Eastern Regional Office – Spokane**

509-456-3115

The packet is also available through the Office of Drinking Water Training and Outreach Section, 360-236-3164, and on the Office of Drinking Water Web site at:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw>

The Department of Health is an equal opportunity agency. For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TTY 1-800-833-6388). For additional copies of this publication, call 1-800-521-0323. This and other publications are available at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw>.